

JULY 29, 2008

A NEW DIRECTION FOR AMERICA

Americans are calling for a New Direction after years of inaction and incompetence on the toughest challenges: a costly war without an end; skyrocketing fuel prices without a plan for energy security; a housing crisis which threatens to force more families from their homes. All have pushed us to the brink of recession.

The New Direction Congress moved quickly to address the downturn and rebuild our economy. With bipartisan support and unprecedented speed, we enacted an economic stimulus plan that put Recovery Rebates in the hands of 130 million American households and will help create 500,000 jobs. We extended Unemployment Insurance to the growing number of Americans looking for work ... made healthy food affordable to millions of Americans ... launched a new GI Bill for a full, four-year education for veterans of Iraq and Afghanistan ... and enacted a comprehensive rescue package for the housing foreclosure crisis dragging down our economy.

We are working now to combat record prices at the pump ... and help restore consumer confidence by protecting our children from toxic toys.

We are building on a strong record.

We made America more secure ... by making the 9/11 Commission recommendations the law of the land to protect Americans and fight terrorism with cargo container and airline screening, security funding distributed on the basis of risk not politics, and improved first responder communications ... and by reducing global warming and our dependence on foreign oil with an historic Energy Independence law that improves vehicle fuel efficiency for the first time in 32 years and makes an historic commitment to American-grown bio-fuels.

We helped put the American Dream back within reach ... with the first minimum wage increase in a decade ... the largest college aid expansion in six decades ... and a national science, technology, math, and engineering teacher corps to spur innovation across our economy.

We met our commitments ... with the largest increase in funding for veterans' health care in history ... overdue aid to the Gulf Coast recovering from Hurricanes Katrina and Rita ... landmark ethics reform ... the first election-year budget agreement in 8 years ... and a new commitment to fiscal responsibility.

We have listened to Americans who demanded a New Direction in Iraq—but our efforts have been resisted again and again. The cost to our troops and their families, our military readiness, our ability to defeat terrorism, our reputation in the world ... and our economy ... has been staggering.

The New Direction Congress must and will do more. It's time for change.

ECONOMIC RECOVERY

- ★ Recovery Rebates to jump-start economy, help Americans with rising costs **SIGNED INTO LAW**
- ★ Extended Unemployment benefits for 3.5 million Americans **SIGNED INTO LAW**
- ★ First increase in the minimum wage in a decade **SIGNED INTO LAW**
- ★ Retaining and creating 380,000 good-paying jobs by meeting shortfall in Highway Trust Fund **PASSED HOUSE**
- ★ Authorizing completion of key highway projects, creating 40,000 good-paying jobs **SIGNED INTO LAW**
- ★ Farm Bill with historic new investments in nutrition, energy, and conservation, and launching reforms to farm payments to reflect farmer need **VETO OVERRIDDEN BY CONGRESS, ENACTED INTO LAW**
- ★ Terrorism risk insurance extension, aiding economic growth **SIGNED INTO LAW**
- ★ Closing tax loopholes for companies and executives that ship American jobs or investment offshore **PASSED HOUSE**

HOUSING FORECLOSURE CRISIS

- ★ Comprehensive housing foreclosure crisis bill, preventing families from losing their homes and their neighbors from losing value in their homes, and creating a federal backstop and tough, independent regulation of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, which hold half the nation's mortgage debt **ON WAY TO PRESIDENT'S DESK**
- ★ Helping states/localities purchase foreclosed homes, stabilizing communities **ON WAY TO PRESIDENT'S DESK**
- ★ Tax credit for first-time homebuyers, and property tax deduction for non-itemizers **ON WAY TO PRESIDENT'S DESK**
- ★ Reform of the Federal Housing Administration, expanding access to affordable mortgages, and to "reverse mortgages" for seniors who need equity from their homes **ON WAY TO PRESIDENT'S DESK**
- ★ Stopping tax on "income" when lender forgives part of mortgage in foreclosure **SIGNED INTO LAW**

EDUCATION AND COMPETITIVENESS

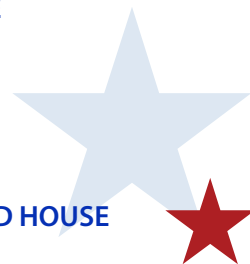
- ★ Largest college aid expansion since the first GI Bill in 1944, cutting college loan rates in half **SIGNED INTO LAW**
- ★ Uninterrupted access to low-cost student loans, despite credit crunch **SIGNED INTO LAW**
- ★ Giving colleges incentives to rein in tuition increases **PASSED HOUSE AND SENATE**
- ★ Cleaning up abuses in the student loan industry **PASSED HOUSE AND SENATE**
- ★ Innovation agenda creating a math/science teacher corps; doubling basic research funding **SIGNED INTO LAW**
- ★ Extended tax cut for innovative research & development **PASSED HOUSE**
- ★ Head Start preschool improved and expanded **SIGNED INTO LAW**
- ★ Key investments in education **VETOED BY PRESIDENT**

REDUCING TAXES

- ★ A tax cut for 19 million middle-income American families facing the AMT in 2007 **SIGNED INTO LAW**
- ★ A tax cut for 25 million middle-income American families facing the AMT in 2008 **PASSED HOUSE**
- ★ Internet tax moratorium extension **SIGNED INTO LAW**
- ★ Extended tax cuts for homeowners, families with children, college students, teachers **PASSED HOUSE**

AMERICAN WORKERS

- ★ Minimum wage increased for the first time in a decade, 2nd phase this month **SIGNED INTO LAW**
- ★ Extending & improving help for workers who lose jobs to foreign competition **PASSED HOUSE**
- ★ Allowing women & other workers to pursue pay discrimination claims **PASSED HOUSE**
- ★ Prohibiting employment discrimination based on sexual orientation **PASSED HOUSE**
- ★ Collective bargaining rights for first responders **PASSED HOUSE**
- ★ Free choice for workers to choose their own bargaining representative **PASSED HOUSE**
- ★ Reversing Supreme Court decisions that had weakened Americans with Disabilities Act **PASSED HOUSE**



AFFORDABLE HEALTH CARE

- ★ Health care coverage for 10 million American children **VETOED BY PRESIDENT**
- ★ Expansion of life-saving stem cell research that could cure or prevent chronic diseases **VETOED BY PRESIDENT**
- ★ Key investments in health care **VETOED BY PRESIDENT**
- ★ Ensuring 44 million American seniors and people with disabilities have access to doctors they know and trust **VETO OVERRIDDEN BY CONGRESS, ENACTED INTO LAW**
- ★ Ban on genetic information discrimination in health coverage **SIGNED INTO LAW**
- ★ Ending discriminatory treatment of mental health care coverage **PASSED HOUSE AND SENATE**
- ★ Medicare required to negotiate cheaper drugs for seniors and disabled Americans **PASSED HOUSE**
- ★ Blocking \$18 billion cut in health care for low-income children & seniors **SIGNED INTO LAW**

NATIONAL SECURITY

- ★ 9/11 Commission terrorism recommendations given force of law **SIGNED INTO LAW**
- ★ Investments to begin to fix the military readiness crisis **SIGNED INTO LAW**
- ★ Iraq benchmarks, progress reports required **SIGNED INTO LAW**
- ★ Providing for responsible redeployment of U.S. troops from Iraq **VETOED BY PRESIDENT**
- ★ Extending ban on torture to U.S. intelligence personnel **VETOED BY PRESIDENT**
- ★ Tighter foreign investment rules, after Dubai Ports scandal **SIGNED INTO LAW**

TROOPS AND VETERANS

- ★ New GI Bill to give free college education to Iraq and Afghanistan veterans **SIGNED INTO LAW**
- ★ Largest veterans' health care funding increase in history **SIGNED INTO LAW**
- ★ Wounded Warrior Act, improving health care after Walter Reed scandal **SIGNED INTO LAW**
- ★ Major pay raise for troops **SIGNED INTO LAW**
- ★ Tax relief for military families **SIGNED INTO LAW**

ENERGY INDEPENDENCE AND GLOBAL WARMING

- ★ Landmark Energy Independence law: first new fuel efficiency standards in 32 years, historic commitment to bio-fuels **SIGNED INTO LAW**
- ★ Extending and expanding tax incentives to invest in clean, renewable energy **PASSED HOUSE**
- ★ Historic new support for non-food bio-fuels in the Farm Bill **VETO OVERRIDDEN BY CONGRESS, ENACTED INTO LAW**
- ★ Directing the President to lower gas prices by suspending deposits to the government's oil stockpile (Strategic Petroleum Reserve) **SIGNED INTO LAW**
- ★ Further close "Enron-like Loophole" to curb excessive petroleum speculation **PASSED HOUSE**
- ★ Holding OPEC and Big Oil accountable for price fixing **PASSED HOUSE AND SENATE**
- ★ Cracking down on price gouging by oil companies **PASSED HOUSE AND SENATE**
- ★ Greening the Capitol, making Congress carbon neutral **ENACTED BY HOUSE**
- ★ Reducing public transit fares and expanding service for commuters pinched at the pump **PASSED HOUSE**

REBUILDING AMERICA

- ★ Aid to the Gulf Coast recovering from Hurricanes Katrina and Rita **SIGNED INTO LAW**
- ★ Major new commitment to flood control & environmental restoration projects **VETO OVERRIDDEN BY CONGRESS, ENACTED INTO LAW**
- ★ Omnibus Public Lands Bill, with new protections for national parks, wilderness, historic sites, trails, and water resources from coast to coast **SIGNED INTO LAW**
- ★ Modernizing and improving Amtrak and other inter-city passenger rail for energy efficiency **PASSED HOUSE AND SENATE**

CONSUMER PROTECTION

- ★ Most sweeping FDA drug safety provisions in more than a decade **SIGNED INTO LAW**
- ★ Banning toxic toys and children's products from China and other countries and toughening enforcement of the Consumer Product Safety Commission **PASSED HOUSE AND SENATE**
- ★ Passenger Bill of Rights for airline travelers **PASSED HOUSE**

FIGHTING CRIME

- ★ Improved background checks for gun purchases **SIGNED INTO LAW**
- ★ 3,000 New Border Patrol Officers **SIGNED INTO LAW**
- ★ Saved the critical COPS program, proposed for elimination by the President **SIGNED INTO LAW**
- ★ Tools and resources to prevent and prosecute hate crimes **PASSED BY HOUSE**

FISCAL DISCIPLINE

- ★ Pay-as-you-go budget discipline **ADOPTED IN HOUSE RULES**
- ★ A fiscally responsible budget that balances by 2012 and invests in key priorities **PASSED BY HOUSE AND SENATE, NO PRESIDENTIAL ACTION REQUIRED**
- ★ Cracking down on "no-bid" contracts **PASSED BY HOUSE AND SENATE**
- ★ Prohibiting profiteering by U.S. contractors operating in war zones **PASSED BY HOUSE**
- ★ Requiring mandatory fraud reporting for U.S. contractors **PASSED BY HOUSE**

RESTORING ACCOUNTABILITY

- ★ Widely-acclaimed landmark lobbying and ethics reform **SIGNED INTO LAW**
- ★ New historic independent Office of Congressional Ethics **ADOPTED IN HOUSE RULES**
- ★ Banning pensions for Members of Congress convicted of certain crimes **SIGNED INTO LAW**
- ★ Strengthening Freedom of Information Act for government transparency **SIGNED INTO LAW**
- ★ U.S. Attorney appointments depoliticized **SIGNED INTO LAW**
- ★ Reducing enormous backlog in passport processing **SIGNED INTO LAW**
- ★ Closing offshore tax loopholes for federal contractors **SIGNED INTO LAW**
- ★ Whistleblower protections strengthened **PASSED BY HOUSE AND SENATE**
- ★ Strengthening independence of federal Inspectors General **PASSED BY HOUSE AND SENATE**
- ★ Holding private security firms in war zones accountable for criminal actions **PASSED BY HOUSE**
- ★ Withholding federal contracts from tax-delinquent companies **PASSED BY HOUSE**
- ★ Requiring more transparency by companies that rely on federal contracts **PASSED BY HOUSE**
- ★ Requiring standards for the preservation of White House and federal agency e-mails **PASSED BY HOUSE**

